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To: Files

From:

Subject: Material from OPC

The attached papers list lines of inquiry and topics of possible historical interest in the development of the Office of Policy Coordination. It is suggestive rather than definitive. There is no intention to declare that any of the individual items included are appropriate material for the historical assessment of the Agency. For general guidance, it may be said that the end product of the historical audit as now envisioned is definitely not an operational history. Operational material will be appropriate only insofar as such material has broad significance, is particularly typical, or has especial impact from the standpoint of lessons learned from experience. What is sought is a documented account of the evolution of the Agency and its major component parts, sufficiently concrete and sufficiently detailed to furnish the present or any future director of the Agency and his immediate staff assistants both a comprehensive and detailed account of what the Agency has become and implications and suggestions as to what it next needs to become. While the historical assessment will be of the highest classification, it still remains that information pertaining to continuing operations which could compromise and endanger personnel or projects should be excluded from such assessment. Therefore this list is prepared for the informal guidance of the appropriate official or officials of OPC, as a series of concrete examples of what, viewed from outside that Office, appears of possible historical significance and interest. Only from within that Office can the propriety and appropriateness of particular material be determined. Conversely, while the exclusion of suggested topics for reasons of operational sensitivity is properly within the purview of OPC itself, the inclusion of other topics not here suggested is equally dependent upon the knowledge and viewpoint of persons within that Office. In borderline cases, it is suggested that material be furnished to the Historical Section subject to review and final determination as to its use, after it has been processed. With respect to such material as is furnished, it is suggested that a combination of three lines of procedure, in varying proportions, may prove most effective: 1. special preparation of material by OPC for the Historical Section; 2. selection of appropriate file material by OPC for examination by the Historical Section; 3. interview of appropriate personnel of OPC by the Historical Section.

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I

RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN ECHELONS

Starting with the premise that the OPC mission succeeds or fails by actions in the field, it can be argued that all echelons of the headquarters establishment have the single purpose of providing guidance, means and services in support of the field echelons.

Guidance is properly concerned with plans, policies and doctrine, starting at the NSC and PSB levels in the broadest and most generalized terms, and descending in increasing particularization to the Division and Country Branch level. Ideally no echelon or staff providing guidance should render ad hoc decision on specific and concrete operations. Theoretically, referral of any concrete problem upward in the chain of command is prima facie evidence of failure in foresight in the mission of establishing policy and doctrine. Practically, in an organization so new-born and devoid of ancestral heritage as CIA, compilation of an adequate body of doctrine can hardly be achieved for several years to come. Meanwhile, in this vacuum of doctrine, referral of specific problems all the way up to the DCI level will be inevitable. Sound development within the Agency requires that such referrals be recognized as red alerts illuminating some area of inadequacy of doctrine. An ad hoc decision may be urgently required, but it will not contribute to the development and maturing of the Agency. Unless the specific decision is accompanied by, or until it is followed by, a decision in principle so formulated as to stand as a manual reference covering similar problems for the future, the determining echelon stands self-confessed of incompetence. Put in other terms, improvisation should be the exclusive prerogative of the field echelons, the front-line troops; fire orders upon targets of opportunity cannot be issued from command posts and higher headquarters. Conversely, catalogues of appropriate targets of opportunity are quite properly issued from higher headquarters.

Means for the field includes above all else adequate, qualified, competent and effective personnel. The selection and assignment of personnel is a proper function of higher command through the successive stages of recruitment, assessment, training and assignment to the field. Thereafter, in an organization in which the outpost must be as autonomous as CIA requires in a field station, higher command can do little more than maintain continuing measurement of accomplishment as accurately as possible and remove personnel for reassignment or discharge immediately the situation warrants.

Services to the field, including the sum of all logistical and technical support, should be geared at all times to supplying what is asked for, rather than in shipping items from predetermined and theoretical TE tables. Here again the dualism of doctrinal principle and operational practice is pertinent. The doctrinal aspect covers the development of

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equipment, the anticipation of needs, and the establishment of TE's. The operational aspect begins with and includes specific shipping lists.

The term "higher headquarters" as used above is equally applicable to the area division level from the viewpoint of the field station, the office level from the division viewpoint, and the deputy director and higher levels from any lower viewpoint.

Against this entire attitude of emphasizing the primacy of the field station is the recurrent viewpoint, sometimes with excellent cause, of irritation toward "these freewheelers in the field." However the eventual solution to difficulties arising from non-conformity in the field lies not in further headquarters review prior to action in the field, but rather to filling in of the established doctrinal bible with principles to which field practice may be required to conform. Older offices of CIA report slow but eventual progress in establishing effective headquarters control of the field. Such control is most readily established when directives and instructions from headquarters are foresighted, mature and worthy of respect. There will always be certain individuals who can never be brought to operate as members of a team, and the situation in OPC faces a probable complication in the fact that many of the qualities of character valuable in its field activities are associated with the characteristics of the non-conformist, the lone wolf and the slippery operator.

The situation at the time of the creation of OPC was particularly unfavorable to the growth of sound administrative and organizational patterns. There was an almost total lack of pre-planning balanced against a sense of extreme urgency. The criterion of "commendable objective and urgency" was, under the circumstances quite properly, used as a substitute for long-range plans. There was a commendable and galvanic feeling that actions in the first year of the Office might be decisive in turning the future course of world history. There was a flux and interchange in duties and areas of activity. The job of patterning future courses was each day less urgent than some emergent operational consideration arising that day. Despite these obstacles to long range planning and building an organization to carry out long range plans, time and attention was early and continuingly devoted to plans for the future. Yet even when progress in this direction was made, the conflict of jurisdiction, with State, the JCS and CIA all having their private interpretation of the degree to which they controlled OPC, created new hazards, road blocks and threats of undoing work that had been done.

QUESTIONS:

1. With respect to each of the following echelons or organizations,
 - a. Has a lag in formulation of policies, principles and doctrine occurred to the detriment of the maturing of OPC?

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- b. Have ad hoc decisions been employed as a substitute for foresighted direction?
- c. What milestones mark definite steps forward in the appropriate apportionment and execution of teamwork through the chain of command?
- d. What past weaknesses in understanding and execution of each echelon's mission with respect to higher and lower echelons still existed by 31 December 1951?

Echelons and organizations: State Department, Policy Planning Staff; JCS, JSPD; NSC (Magnitude issue already available in sufficient detail); PSB; DCI; DDCI; DDP; ADSO; AESO staff sections insofar as they have exercised de-facto authority over Divisions; PW Division insofar as it has exercised de-facto authority over geographic divisions; the Geographic Divisions.

2. Evolution of the relationship with and service received from, up to 31 December 1951, and statement of any continuing weaknesses as of that date; Personnel Office in matters of recruitment; Office of Training and predecessor components; I&SO particularly with respect to the approach to operational and covert clearances as a weighing of the operational purpose against the security factors developed to obtain a calculation of risk as distinguished from a rigid measurement of the security factors developed and a decision rendered in a vacuum without consideration of the operational purpose and possible benefits; Contact Division in matters of operational support from U.S. private enterprise. (NSC No. 10/2 and the Winzer memo of Interpretation of 12 August 1948, set up a barrier between OPC and service components of CIA. The Smith repudiation of that memo, transmitted orally on 11 October 1950 broke through that barrier. However, there was some gradual development of relationships between OPC and the rest of CIA, dictated by necessity, between those dates.)

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II

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Evolution and final situation on furnishing of policy guidance to OPC. In maintaining continuous revision of the Policy Book, what are the mechanics of translating guidance from the Policy Planning Staff of State, the JSPD and the PSB into the elucidation of doctrine? Are the respective spheres of authority of these three bodies so precisely delineated that there is no overlap or occasion for conflict between their formulations? If not, how are such conflicts resolved? Who is the ultimate authority among them? Has the PSB in any respect supplanted State's PPS or the JSPD in the guidance role? Or do the State and Defense members of the PSB take responsibility for pre-coordinating with other liaison to OPC in their respective departments? A critic of the PSB has stated that that body had the choice of issuing directives and having them circumvented or issuing guidance and having it ignored, and the latter alternative had been chosen. This would of course apply rather to the Director and subordinate personnel rather than to the Board itself. Comment on the effectiveness of the inter-agency coordination resulting from the actions of various working groups convened by the PSB. In the original arrangements, major projects had to be referred back to State's PPS for approval. Has this procedure altered since the emergence of the PSB? Catalogue of actual achievement and development of working relationships under the PSB. Part II, Section VI, B, 6, a of the 10 October 1951 revision of the Strategic Plan states that the PyDiv will provide direction, guidance and means to the area divisions on economic, political, propaganda and scientific matters, and that Soviet personnel will be encouraged to desert and seek haven and will be provided with interim sanctuary and prepared for employment. To what extent does the PyDiv serve as the channel from the PSB to the operating echelons? Does any obfuscation result from the apparent blending of staff and operating functions in the PyDiv? Does the PyDiv serve as the planning agency for such projects as [redacted] Any further details on arrangements and effectiveness of the coordinated attack on psychological warfare matters both at the inter- and intra-agency levels. For a considerable period of time the seat of top policy guidance on economic warfare remained undefined. Annex C, Section III, 1, of the Strategic Plan states that the PSB is responsible for policy guidance for covert economic operations. Does this provide such definition, and if so, does the PSB in turn derive its guidance from the NSC, as in NSC No. 104/2? If not, where? Of particular interest in all these considerations is the manner and form in which guidance, flowing down from the top, reaches the operating level.

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